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REUTER
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BUSH DENIES MAGAZINE REPORT OF SECRET INVOLVEMENT IN CIA

NEW YORK, July 11, Reuter - Vice President George Bush on Sunday denied a magazine report that said he may have secretly worked for the Central Intelligence Agency more than 10 years before becoming its director.

The Nation magazine said in an article that it had discovered a 1963 memo from then Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) director J. Edgar Hoover to the State Department saying an FBI agent had briefed "Mr. George Bush of the CIA" on the reaction of Cuban exiles to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The magazine, a liberal weekly, also quoted an unidentified source close to the intelligence community as saying Bush's oil company may have been used for clandestine activities.

Bush's spokesman Steve Hart denied the report. "There's nothing to (the article)," he told Reuters.

Asked if any of the charges were true about Bush's ties to the agency before President Gerald Ford named him CIA director in 1975, Hart said, "It's wrong. It's not true."

The magazine's executive editor, Richard Lingeman, also said it was possible that the George Bush mentioned in the memo was not the vice president.

"We can't prove it was the same George Bush," Lingeman told Reuters. "It could be a mistaken identity."

"It just seems that if it could be any George Bush it seems a little more likely that it's the George Bush who was the director of the intelligence agency but it still could be another George Bush," he said.

Lingeman said the article quoted an unidentified source close to the intelligence community as saying he had heard Bush had worked for the CIA in the early 1960s and was involved in operations in the Caribbean connected with the U.S.-backed Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba in 1961 and other CIA activities.

The same source also said Bush's oil company in 1961 may have been a CIA cover operation, the editor said.

Lingeman said the magazine was unable to find two other men mentioned in the memo. He said an FBI agent named W.T. Forsyth who gave the briefing has since died and the magazine could not find a Captain Edwards of the Defense Intelligence Agency who was said to have been at the meeting.

Lingeman said the memo was contained in thousands of documents from the Warren Commission's investigation into the Kennedy assassination.

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He said the article, written by reporter Joseph McBride, found Bush's public statements about his activities during that time "a bit vague" and speculates that Bush was unlikely to have been appointed CIA director in 1975 without some agency experience, Lingeman said.

He said the article was McBride's first for The Nation, the country's oldest political weekly. He said McBride is a California film reporter for the entertainment publication

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